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ABSTRACT

The Focus on NAEP series briefly summarizes information about the ongoing development and implementation of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Each of the five issues in this collection provides an overview of an aspect of NAEP assessment related to the arts. The issues are: (1) "The NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment: An Overview" (Volume 2, No. 4); (2) "NAEP and Dance: Framework and Field Tests" (Volume 3. No. 1); (3) "NAEP and Music: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment" (Volume 3, No. 2); (4) NAEP and Theater: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment" (Volume 3, No. 3); and (5) "NAEP and the Visual Arts: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment" (Volume 3, No. 4). (SLD)

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The Nation's Report Card

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THE NATION'S REPORT CARD

Focus on NAEP

Vol. 2 No. 4 August 1998

The NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment: An Overview

Abstract: *The NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment represents the first comprehensive approach on a national level to the development of methods for assessing student performance in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts. This Focus on NAEP, the first in a series of five publications, gives an overview of that effort.*

Introduction. In 1997 the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) completed the first national arts assessment in twenty years, and the first ever to go beyond music and the visual arts to include theatre. Assessments for music, theatre, and the visual arts and also dance were field tested in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades. The full-scale assessment covered eighth-grade students only, and did not include dance. In addition to including a broader range of art forms, the assessment used a richer mix of art works for students to respond to, and more diverse tasks, which required students to create and perform, as well as respond. These tasks required innovative scoring methods to evaluate student artistic achievement objectively and reliably. This *Focus on NAEP* report, along with four others on the individual arts, will give a preview of the NAEP 1997 Arts Education Report Card, to be released in the fall of 1998.

The Arts Education Report Card will contain an assessment of eighth-grade student performance in music, theatre, and the visual arts, drawing data from both public and private schools. NAEP assessed performance in music and the visual arts using a nationally representative sample of all students, regardless of their background in music or the visual arts. The theatre assessment was a targeted assessment, limited to students who would have taken at least 30 class hours of instruction in theatre by the end of the 1996–97 school year. The samples were large enough to obtain statistically valid results. Because of the difficulty of obtaining a sample large enough to be consistent with NAEP's standards, no assessment of dance was conducted, although the Report Card will contain examples of dance assessment tasks.

Background. In 1992, the Arts Education Consensus Project, sponsored by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), began an 18-month effort to establish objectives for assessing arts education in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. The National Endowment for the Arts, in collaboration with the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, funded the Arts Education Consensus Project, designed to develop the NAEP Arts Education Framework. The framework, developed simultaneously with the National Standards for Arts Education, received substantial input from the general public, along with arts educators, artists, policy makers, and business representatives. In 1995, NAEP began field-testing assessment tasks based on the framework, administering the actual assessment in 1997.

The importance of the arts. The NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework reflects its authors' conviction that the arts are essential for every child's complete development and education. The expectation is not that all children will become professional artists, although some will. What is expected is that all students will experience the joy of creating and the self-confidence that comes from the development of skills and performance; that they will come to know the importance of discipline, practice, persistence, and self-

criticism; and that they will apply what they have experienced and learned through the arts to other aspects of their lives. The benefits of artistic experience and knowledge are prized not only by educators but also by parents and the business community.

Arts for everyone. The ultimate purpose of the NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework was to obtain a comprehensive picture of what arts education is in the United States and what it ought to be. The framework emphasized performance, and the assessment of the arts achievement of *all* students, not just those with specialized education in the arts. This was not always possible. Not all American schools offer significant instruction in all four arts. Some schools sponsor extensive arts education programs, providing instruction in dance and theatre, as well as music and the visual arts. In some school systems, however, the arts are a marginal experience for students at the elementary and middle school level and an elective subject in high school.

The Framework Matrix

The Arts Education Consensus Project created a special matrix to guide the development of the assessment framework, helping to ensure consistency in assessment across the arts (see figure 1). The matrix analyzed all four arts in terms of processes and content. Processes include (1) *creating*, (2) *performing*, and (3) *responding*. Content includes (1) *knowledge* and (2) *skills*, including *perceptual*, *technical*, *expressive*, and *intellectual/reflective* skills. This section sets forth the framework's analysis of the four art forms in terms of process and content.

As the matrix illustrates, the nature of dance and music allows students to be assessed both as creators and performers. In theatre, creating and performing blend into one: even the performance of an existing play requires students to make creative decisions involving lighting, staging, costume, direction, and characterization. In the visual arts, students are assessed as creators, not performers. The process of responding, on the other hand, is applicable for all four arts. Content, the knowledge and skills appropriate for each individual art, cuts across all four disciplines.

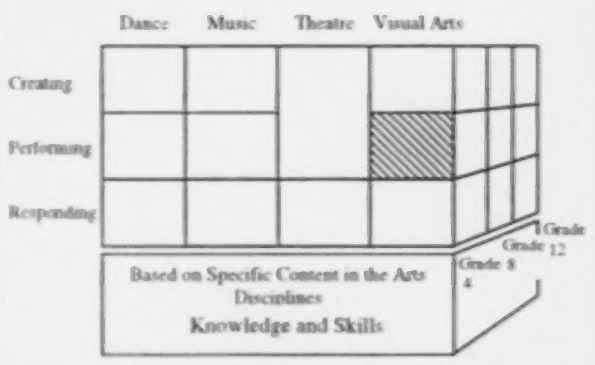
Processes

Creating refers to generating original art. This includes the expression of a student's unique and personal ideas, feelings, and responses by creating a visual image, a dramatic character, a written or improvised dramatic work, or by composing or improvising a piece of music or a dance.

Performing means re-creating an *existing* work, a process that calls upon the abilities of students to reproduce or interpret such a work. Typically, "performing" does not apply to the visual arts, where reproducing an artist's existing work is not central. A student playing a transcription for solo piano of George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* is an example of performing, while an improvisation on the same piece would be an example of creating.

Responding varies from the relatively passive response of an audience member to a work of art or performance to the interactive response between a creator/performer and his/her creation. Although a response is often thought of as verbal (either oral or written), responses can also be conveyed non-verbally or in the art forms themselves. Such a response can be emotional, intellectual, or physical, as the work is at once understood and critiqued. Responding requires students to exercise their abilities to analyze, reflect, make judgments, and generate new ideas. A student writing a critique of a performance of *Rhapsody in Blue* is an example of responding,

Figure 1.—The Framework Matrix



NOTE: In theatre, creating and performing blend into one, while in the visual arts, students are assessed as creators, not performers.

SOURCE: 1997 NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board

while a student choreographing a dance to *Rhapsody in Blue* would be an example of creating which shares elements of responding.

Content

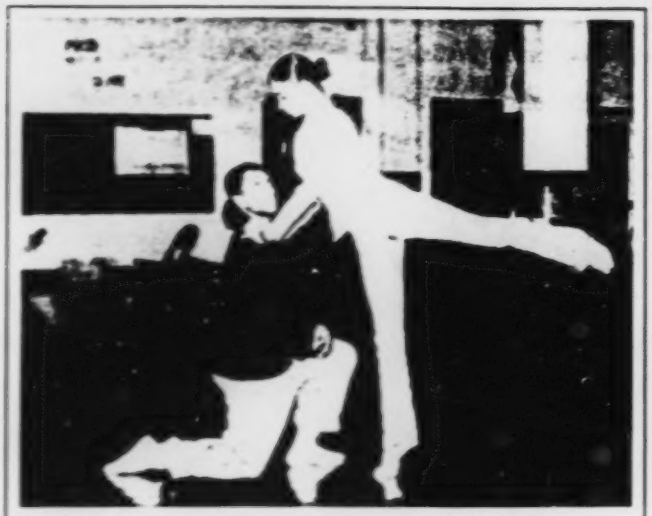
There are two major components of learning expected of students who participate in the study of the arts. Students should gain (1) *knowledge and understanding about the arts*, including the *personal*, *historical*, *cultural*, and *social* contexts for works, and (2) *perceptual*, *technical*, *expressive*, and *intellectual/reflective skills*.

Knowledge and Understanding. When students engage in the artistic processes of creating, performing, and responding, they draw upon various kinds of knowledge and understanding about the arts in order to construct meaning.

Personal knowledge is knowledge drawn from a student's own life and experiences. A student looking at a self-portrait by Rembrandt or Chuck Close would draw on her own self-knowledge to consider how she might portray herself. *Historical knowledge* can refer to both general historical knowledge and knowledge of the history of a specific art form. Students performing Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night* would benefit from knowing about the Irish immigrant experience at the turn of the 20th century and about naturalism in American literature and theatre.

Cultural knowledge includes knowledge about students' own culture and its past, and knowledge of other cultures. Students studying or performing in Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring* should understand the interest in American folklore, democratic ideals, and patriotism that characterized the period of the Great Depression and World War II. *Social knowledge* includes an understanding of social values, structures, and change. A work like Duke Ellington's *Black, Brown, and Beige*, depicting the African American's long struggle to escape oppression and achieve equality, demands social awareness on the part of the listener to be understood fully.

Skills. The acquisition and application of skills determine the *quality* of creating, performing and responding within the arts. Students require *perceptual skills* to grasp the significance of sensory stimuli and to discern nuance within a given art form. For example, dancers must recognize beats and rhythms to perform correctly. *Technical skills*, such as the physical dexterity developed by musicians, are needed to produce a work with quality. *Expressive skills* allow students to impart a unique and personal nature to the work and create a distinctive impression on their audience. This occurs in drama when performers communicate personal emotion through the dialogue and action of the play. Finally, *intellectual/reflective skills* enable students to test different creative possibilities, solve artistic problems, refine their work, and push it beyond the immediate, as a painter does when he takes an outdoor sketch and reworks it in the studio.



NAEP and Dance. Dance assessment tasks for fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-grade students were developed and field tested, but no assessment was administered in dance, because of the difficulty of obtaining a sample large enough to be consistent with NAEP's technical standards. The 1997 Arts Education Report Card will contain dance assessment tasks for the eighth grade, while a separate Field Test Process Report will contain dance assessment tasks and scoring guides for all three grades.

NOTE: For reasons of confidentiality, the students shown in this picture are not NAEP participants.

PHOTO BY JULIE NORA

Throughout the processes of creating, performing, and responding in the arts, students are called upon to apply knowledge and skills simultaneously. Knowledge and skills rarely function in isolation; one implies the other. Students involved in creating, performing, and responding gain knowledge "about" the arts, but also learn "through" and "with" the arts. In turn, students later use such knowledge—in history, for example, or aesthetics—when creating, performing, or responding.

Assessment Tasks

The NAEP Arts Education Assessment developed innovative tasks for the contents and processes of all four arts disciplines at the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades.

NAEP and Music. The NAEP 1997 Music Assessment of eighth-grade students is the first national music assessment since 1978. Students were assessed regardless of whether they had studied music. Results will appear in the NAEP 1997 Arts Education Report Card. NAEP also developed and tested assessment tasks and scoring guides for fourth- and twelfth-grade students. Materials for all three grades will appear in the Field Test Process Report.

NOTE: For reasons of confidentiality, the student shown in this picture is not a NAEP participant.

PHOTO BY CLAIRE FLANDERS, courtesy Levine School of Music, Washington, DC

Assessment tasks were prepared by the Educational Testing Service, under the guidance of four discipline-specific committees, composed of arts educators and state officials. NAEP began field testing these tasks in 1995. Field tests for fourth- and eighth-grade students were completed in 1995 for all four subjects, while the twelfth-grade field tests occurred in 1997, for all four subjects. The twelfth-grade field tests were held to evaluate the validity of the arts tasks, even though NAEP had determined that it would not conduct an assessment for twelfth-grade students. The arts tasks tested included both paper-and-pencil and performance tasks.

Paper-and-pencil tasks. Special paper-and-pencil tasks were developed to assess students' understanding of the arts. For example, the field test of the dance tasks used videotapes of actual dances as cues, or "stimuli," for questions. The field test for music used a special recording of a violin performance that included deliberate errors to assess students' ability to detect "right" and "wrong" ways of playing. In the field test for theatre, students were shown a scene from a film, first without and then with the soundtrack, and were asked to discuss the extent to which the non-verbal behavior of the actors conveyed the meaning of the scene. In the field test of the visual arts, students were shown four types of cups, ranging from plastic to fine china, and were asked questions that considered the cups from both aesthetic and functional points of view.

The paper-and-pencil tasks included multiple-choice, short constructed-response, and extended constructed-response questions, which required students to write one or more paragraphs in response to the stimuli. These tasks required sophisticated scoring guides that could discriminate between, and give credit for, the full range of possible student answers.

Performance tasks. The performance tasks proved to be especially complex. Unlike other NAEP assessments, video and audio recording devices were used to record the tasks. In the dance field test, professional dancers demonstrated dances to students in person after it was found that students had difficulty using pre-recorded videos to learn the dance routines. In the music field test, students sang, played their own instruments, and, in some cases, used electronic keyboards. In the visual arts performance tasks, students worked with Plasticine (a clay-like substance), charcoal, drawing pencils, and numerous construction materials. Scoring guides had to be developed to provide consistent and accurate assessment

NAEP and Theatre. The NAEP 1997 Theatre Assessment of eighth-grade students is the first national assessment of student achievement in theatre. The assessment was limited to students who had taken in-school theatre classes. Results will appear in the NAEP 1997 Arts Education Report Card. NAEP also developed and tested assessment tasks and scoring guides for fourth- and twelfth-grade students. Materials for all three grades will appear in the Field Test Process Report.

NOTE: For reasons of confidentiality, the students shown in this picture are not NAEP participants.

Photo of 1990 production of "The Children's Hour" courtesy Living Library Theatre, Inc., Santa Monica, California

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of the full range of student achievement on these tasks. NAEP plans to make available to the public all the tasks not covered by copyright.

Assessment Sample

The assessments for music and the visual arts used *nationally representative* samples of the general student population of eighth graders, while the theatre assessment was targeted to eighth graders who had taken in-school theatre classes. NAEP used a targeted assessment for theatre both to assess the students fairly and obtain results that resembled the breadth of student achievement allowed for in the theatre scoring guides. The field tests in theatre for the fourth and eighth grades, which sampled the general student population, found that it was difficult to obtain the full range of performance from the students sampled. Because of the limited number of schools in the country offering dance programs, NAEP did not conduct an assessment for dance.

The music and theatre assessments used samples of about 2,000 students each, while the visual arts sample was about 2,500. These samples were large enough to support statistically reliable analyses.

NAEP Arts Education Reports

The 1997 Arts Education Report Card will be published in the fall of 1998 and will give data on eighth-grade student achievement in music, theatre, and the visual arts. It will also give examples of assessment tasks from the eighth-grade dance field test. In addition, the Report Card will provide information from a variety of background questionnaires. Students who participated in the three assessments—music, theatre, and the visual arts—filled out questionnaires. School background questionnaires were administered for all three subjects. A teacher background questionnaire was administered for theatre only, because the theatre assessment was targeted. This ensured that the students who took the assessment had taken classes from the teachers responding to the questionnaire. Information from these questionnaires can be used to identify possible relationships between student background and student achievement or between school or classroom practices and student achievement.

The Field Test Process Report will be published in the spring of 1999 and will provide extensive information on the development, administration, and scoring of assessment tasks for the four arts disciplines at the fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-grade levels. Schools, districts, and states can use the process report to help develop or refine their own arts assessment programs at all three grade levels. In addition, arts educators may want to adapt specific assessment tasks and scoring guides for use in their own classes.

NAEP and the Visual Arts. The NAEP 1997 Visual Arts Assessment of eighth-grade students is the first national visual arts assessment since 1978. Students were assessed regardless of whether they had studied the visual arts. Results will appear in the NAEP 1997 Arts Education Report Card. NAEP also developed and tested assessment tasks and scoring guides for fourth- and twelfth-grade students. These materials will appear in the Field Test Process Report

NOTE: For reasons of confidentiality, the students shown in this picture are not NAEP participants.

PHOTO BY UNIPHOTO

Four Focus on NAEP publications, on dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts, are currently available. Each provides additional background and detail on NAEP activities in the particular art covered by the *Focus on NAEP*.

Conclusion

The NAEP Arts Education Assessment is the first comprehensive approach to developing an assessment of all four arts on a national level. The assessment developed paper-and-pencil and performance tasks for all four arts disciplines, based on a common understanding of arts processes and content; it created tasks suitable for a variety of students with a variety of educational backgrounds; and it created effective scoring guides that could recognize and give credit for the full range of student ability. The findings provide performance data for the general population of eighth-grade students in music

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and the visual arts, as well as performance data for a targeted population of eighth-grade students in theatre.

The authors of the Arts Education Framework argued that "No child in an American school should be deprived of the opportunity to see, hear, touch, and understand the accumulated wisdom of our artistic heritage, and to make one's own contributions through productions and performances." The NAEP Arts Education Assessment will provide significant information toward determining how close American schools are to achieving that goal.

For Further Information

Arts Education Assessment Framework for the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress. Single copies are available free from the National Assessment Governing Board, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 825, Washington, DC 20002–4233. Copies may also be obtained at **http://www.nagb.org/pub.html**.

National Standards for Arts Education. Copies are available for $20 from the Music Educators National Conference, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston VA 20191, 800–336–3768.

Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, NCES 95–082, provides data obtained from questionnaires sent to the principals of nationally representative samples of public schools. It is not in print, but is available over the NAEP web site at **http://nces.ed.gov/NAEP/**.

The following Focus on NAEP publications are also available free from the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20208–5653. Copies may also be accessed over the World Wide Web at **http://nces.ed.gov/NAEP/**.

NAEP and Dance: Framework, Field Test, and Survey, NCES 98–459

NAEP and Music: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–529

NAEP and Theatre: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–528

NAEP and the Visual Arts: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–526

The Focus on NAEP series briefly summarizes information about the ongoing development and implementation of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This series is a product of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Pascal D. Forgione, Jr., Commissioner, Gary W. Phillips, Associate Commissioner for Education Assessment. This issue was written by **Sheida White** of NCES and by **Alan Vanneman** of the Education Statistics Services Institute. For more information, contact **Sheida White** at 202–219–1675. To order other NAEP publications, call Bob Clemons at 202–219–1690, or e-mail bob_clemons@ed.gov.

Information on NAEP may also be obtained over the World Wide Web at **http://nces.ed.gov/naep/**.

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Focus on NAEP

Vol. 3 No. 1 August 1998

NAEP and Dance: Framework and Field Tests

Abstract: *The NAEP Arts Education Framework set new standards for assessment of students' dance achievement. The dance framework, and the field testing of dance assessment tasks developed in response to the framework, provide significant new information for schools, dance organizations, and dance studios charged with developing their own dance education programs and assessments.*

In 1992, the Arts Education Consensus Project, sponsored by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), began an 18-month effort to establish objectives for assessing arts instruction in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) had assessed music in 1972 and 1978 and the visual arts in 1975 and 1978. The National Endowment for the Arts, in collaboration with the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, funded the Arts Education Consensus Project, designed to develop the NAEP Arts Education Framework.

The Consensus Project[1] identified objectives for arts education in general and individually for dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades. It also developed Assessment Specifications for each of the four arts, setting forth requirements for the content of the assessments in more detail. NAEP field-tested the dance assessment for the fourth and eighth grades in 1995 and for the twelfth grade in 1997. In the spring of 1999, NAEP will publish a Field Test Process Report, on the development, administration, and scoring of arts tasks for the three grades in all four arts, including dance.

In 1997, NAEP conducted an assessment of student performance in music, theatre, and the visual arts, for the eighth grade only. NAEP did not attempt an assessment of eighth-grade students in dance, because the number of schools offering comprehensive dance education programs in the eighth grade is not large enough to permit NAEP to obtain a sample of students consistent with its standards.[2] While some schools offer very rich programs, many have limited programs or none at all. In the fall of 1998, NAEP will publish the examples of dance assessment tasks, along with assessment data for eighth-grade student achievement in music, theatre, and the visual arts, in the NAEP 1997 Arts Education Report Card.

The dance framework and field-test information form a unique resource for dance students, educators, instructors, and policymakers at the state and local levels. College dance programs and private studios, where most formal dance instruction takes place in the United States, will also find the framework of long-term use. This *Focus on NAEP* will give a summary of the dance framework set forth in the *Arts Education Assess-*

The many varieties of dance, including ballet, ballroom, ethnic, jazz, and modern, are part of America's artistic heritage.

NOTE: For reasons of confidentiality, the students shown in this picture are not NAEP participants.

PHOTO BY JULIE NORA

Table 1.—NAEP Guidelines for Dance Assessment

Dance assessment shall

- Affirm dance as a way of knowing with a unique capacity to integrate the intellect, emotions, and physical skills.
- Honor dance as a discrete art form, but also encourage students to see the artistic experience as a unified whole.
- Examine and report on developing abilities of students.
- Connect with students' real-life experiences of dance.
- Evaluate students primarily through performance.
- Go beyond quantification to include critical judgment.
- Use background variables to recognize differences and inequities in school resources (large-scale assessments only).
- Address both the processes and products of dance, and expand the public's awareness of the importance of each.
- Employ a comprehensive vision of dance education, including what ought to be in dance education, rather than simply what is.
- Produce information useful to a variety of audiences—students, parents, teachers, administrators, policymakers, artists, and other community members.
- Sample student performance separately for general and specialized dance programs (large-scale assessments only).
- Reflect a pluralistic view of dance education, both in terms of individual products and the cultural bases of dance.

Source: NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board

ment Framework and describe the development and field testing of the dance assessment tasks.

The Importance of Dance

The NAEP Arts Education framework is founded on a vision of a society that believes the arts are essential for every child's complete development and education. The expectation is not that all children will become professional dancers, although some will. What is expected is that all students will experience the joy of creating and the self-confidence that comes from the development of skills and performance, that they will come to know the importance of discipline, practice, persistence, and self-criticism, and that they will apply these lessons to other aspects of their lives.

Through dance students can discover insights into themselves and into their social and cultural worlds. In addition, they can come to understand the importance of dance in their own culture and in cultures around the world, for today dance is remarkably international and draws inspiration from many cultures. The NAEP framework sets guidelines for assessment that will respect the diversity of today's dance world (see table 1).

The Dance Assessment Framework: Content and Processes

The dance assessment framework covers both content and processes. Content includes (1) *knowledge and understanding* of dance and (2) *perceptual, technical, expressive,* and *intellectual/reflective skills*. Processes include (1) *creating,* (2) *performing,* and (3) *responding*. While much of what students know, as well as what they can do, will be demonstrated through performance, the dance assessment framework includes a written portion as well. Table 2 sets forth the dance assessment framework in brief.

Content

Knowledge and understanding of dance are valuable in themselves. They can also increase students' ability to perform, and increase their ability to place dance in a more objective context than that offered by their own experiences. This context includes their own *personal perspective*, but goes beyond it to include *social, cultural, and historical contexts* as well. Students need a knowledge of *aesthetics* in order to understand the varied concepts and philosophies of dances from different cultures and periods. Students also need to understand the use of *form and structure* in dance, and the *technical processes* needed to create them.

The *acquisition and application of skills* determine the quality of the learning experience. Students apply a variety of cognitive, affective, and motor skills in dance. *Perceptual skills* are needed to collect and analyze the sensory stimuli of music, rhythm, and movement. *Technical skills* are needed to produce quality work. *Expressive skills* are needed to add a unique and personal nature to the work. *Intellectual/reflective skills* are needed to test different creative possibilities, solve artistic problems, refine work, and help students to consider dance in a thoughtful manner.

In dance, knowledge and skills are inextricably connected. Students combine both to express themselves through movement and to create dance works that exist within larger cultural contexts.

Processes

Creating refers to generating original art. This may include, but should not be limited to, the expression of a student's personal ideas, in the form of movement, choreography, or improvisation. To convey ideas and feelings, students make use of movement and elements of choreography. Through a knowledge of vocabulary, improvisation, and compositional structures, students are able to collaborate with others in the shared expression and the creation of dance.

Performing means performing existing works, a process that calls upon the interpretive skills of the student. Dance uses the human body both as instrument and thinking medium. Students progressively develop dance knowledge, skills, techniques, and responses that allow them to use their bodies with confi-

Table 2.—Dance Assessment Framework*

Processes		
Creating	**Performing**	**Responding**
• Invent solutions to movement problems, generating alternatives and selecting from them.	• Accurately recall and reproduce movements.	• Identify compositional elements and notice details.
• Follow improvisational and compositional structures.	• Demonstrate physical technique.	• Identify contexts (stylistic, cultural, social, historical) of the dance.
• Collaborate to achieve solutions.	• Communicate through movement.	• Make informed critical observations about the dance's and the dancer's technical and artistic components.

Content	
Knowledge	**Skills**
• Understanding of context (personal, social, cultural, and historical)	• Perceptual
• Aesthetics	• Technical
• Form and Structure	• Expressive
• Technical Processes	• Intellectual/reflective

*Used in field test only. SOURCE: 1997 NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board

dence, success, and insight. Physical skills required in performing dance include coordination, agility, flexibility, balance, strength, and control of movement. Through dance, students gain spatial awareness, bodily awareness, musicality, and an increased ability to observe and refine movement. Dance also fosters an awareness of historical, cultural, and stylistic elements involved in the creation and performance of movement. In dance performance, thought, action, and emotion work together to achieve a single effect.

Responding to dance involves a level of perceptual or observational skill; a description, analysis or interpretation on the part of the respondent; and sometimes a judgment or evaluation based on criteria that may either be self-constructed or commonly held by a group or culture. Responding to dance must include the vital dimension of experiencing, knowing, and thoughtfully interpreting dance. Whether responding to one's own dance or to the dance of others, students should develop new levels of understanding, insight, and perceptual acuity as a consequence of interacting with dance.

The Field Test Samples

The fourth- and eighth-grade NAEP dance field tests were conducted in February 1995. A general population of students participated. Students were not required to have taken any dance instruction. About 1,500–2,000 students participated in each of the two field tests. The field test for grade twelve, conducted in April 1997, called for a targeted population of students. Only students who had taken an in-school dance class during the 1996–97 school year were eligible. About 800 students in 68 public and private schools participated. NAEP used a targeted sample for the twelfth-grade field test to fairly assess the students and obtain results that resembled the breadth of the dance standards. The twelfth-grade field tests were held to evaluate the validity of the dance tasks, even though NAEP had determined that it would not conduct an assessment for twelfth-grade students.

In all three field tests, the dance background of tested students varied widely. The designers of the assessment framework wanted to be as inclusive as possible. However, the experience with the fourth- and eighth-grade field tests suggested that only students with in-school dance education should participate. To fairly assess the students and obtain results that resembled the breadth of the dance standards, NAEP decided to sample only students who had had some instruction in dance for the twelfth-grade field test. Even so, students with a single dance course were assessed along with students with four years of intensive in-school training.

Dance Tasks

NAEP used two types of assessment tasks in the field tests to present an appropriate overview of dance: paper-and-pencil tasks and performance tasks. Assessment tasks were prepared by the Educational Testing Service, under the guidance of a committee of dance education experts. The fourth-grade field test devoted 50–60 minutes to the paper-and-pencil tasks and 20 minutes to the performance task, while the eighth- and twelfth-grade field tests devoted about 50–60 minutes to the paper-and-pencil tasks and 30 minutes to the performance task. In all cases, times are approximate only, depending on the specific tasks involved. The performance task assessed creating or performing, while the paper-and-pencil tasks assessed students' abilities to respond to dance.

The NAEP performance tasks are designed to be as authentic as time and resources permit. However, the tasks must also offer the same opportunities and the same challenges, in the same circumstances, for all the students assessed. No compari-

son across students is possible without such standardization. In the dance field test, such standardization necessitated limiting "choice" among tasks. For example, within a group of tasks about a series of dances, students were asked to analyze the same dance for a given question, rather than being able to choose to analyze a particular dance from the series. In the performance tasks, all students were asked to engage in the same dance task for the same period of time.

The dance performance tasks, especially the creating tasks, differentiate between students at both the low and high ends of the achievement spectrum. At the low end, it is possible to measure the difference between students with no training and those with a little training. At the high end, the tasks provide sufficient richness and depth so that those with greater skills can demonstrate the extent of their accomplishments. This discussion of dance tasks will refer to the twelfth-grade field test exclusively, since it is the most recent. NAEP plans to make available to the public all tasks, for all three grades, both paper-and-pencil and performance, that are not covered by copyright.

1. Paper-and-Pencil Tasks

The NAEP field test of students' ability to respond to dance asked students to observe videotaped dance performances and answer written questions about them. Questions were multiple choice, short written response, and extended written response.

Twelfth-grade students were given four different pen-and-pencil tasks, or blocks. (Any individual student took two such blocks.) Each block consisted of approximately five or six multiple-choice questions and five to seven open-ended ("constructed-response") questions.

NAEP allows both partial and full credit for answers to constructed-response tasks. For example, scoring guides for the field test might give the following criteria for evaluating answers to a short constructed-response question like the one given in table 3:

Unacceptable: Response provides no correct uses of the costumes.

Partial: Response provides either one specific use of the costumes or one or two general uses of the costumes.

Acceptable: Response provides two specific uses of the costumes.

2. Performance Tasks

The NAEP dance field test used separate tasks to measure creating and performing. For both tasks, students were led through an eight-minute warm-up. Warm-ups for the two tasks differed; the creating warm-up gave the students tasks emphasizing self-directed movement explorations ("move your body like a flag in the wind"). A special performance area was marked out, which allowed the students' performance to be videotaped in its entirety. Performances were all taped twice. When four students were being taped (during the performing task), students switched positions for the second taping, to ensure visibility of each student's performance, and to test students' ability to remember the dance well enough to repeat it.

Table 3.— Twelfth-Grade Dance Field Test Scoring Guide for Paper-and-Pencil Task

Multiple Choice

The movements performed by the dancers in Dance 1 can best be described as: a) flowing; b) sharp; c) heavy; d) slow

Which of the following technical skills are most often demonstrated by the dancers in Dance 2?

a) abdominal control; b) fluidity of the spine; c) the use of muscular tension; d) high kicks.

Short Constructed-Response

Describe two specific ways in which costumes are an important part of Dance 1.

Extended Constructed-Response

Compare the way the feet of the dancers are used in Dance 1 and Dance 2.

Creating. The creating task for the twelfth-grade field test gave paired students ten minutes to create a brief dance on the theme of metamorphosis. Samples of metamorphosis given to the students included a caterpillar changing to a butterfly, ice melting to water, fire burning to ashes, and (from films) depictions of humans changing to animals.

Students were asked to begin their dance in one particular section of the performance area and end it in another, in order to demonstrate movement that travels to different spots. They were also given the following additional requirements:

- **Begin** with a clear, still pose
- **Develop** using
  Two different shapes (using the whole body)
  Three different levels (high, middle, low)
  Two different movement types (sharp and smooth)
- **End** in a clear, still pose

Students selected such examples of metamorphosis as seeds to grain, eggs to birds, and mother caring for child to child caring for mother.

Students who performed the creating task were evaluated on the following points:

- Did their dance demonstrate smooth or sharp qualities?
- Did their dance demonstrate fast or slow timing?
- Did the dance demonstrate two or more levels?
- Did one movement travel at least halfway across the performance space?
- Did the dance have a clear beginning and a clear ending?
- Was the dance performed smoothly without interruptions?

Performing. The performing task was presented to students by professional dancers serving as demonstrators. Students were taught a brief jazz dance, taken at a moderate tempo. Students

learned the dance in pieces, then performed it once through with the facilitator, and finally performed twice on their own. These two performances were videotaped.

The dance offered a variety of movements, some sharp and abrupt, and others extended and flowing. The dance offered rhythmic variety as well. The dance challenged students' balance and extension with a sustained leg lift. Students were told to dance with "focus and expression" for both tasks.

Students' performance of the dance was evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Did students reproduce the movement phrase accurately when the dance facilitator was not demonstrating the phrase?
- What was the level of students' movement skills in the following areas:
  - Balance
  - Extension of limbs
  - Vertical alignment during leg extension
  - Clarity in body facings
  - Demonstration of movement qualities required in script
- Did students demonstrate awareness of rhythm of the phrase by moving on the pulse of the music?
- Did students demonstrate the concept of isolating body parts?
- Did students accurately repeat the sequence of the entire movement phrase, moving without hesitation?
- Were students able to connect the phrases and individual movements of the dance?

The creating task gave students the opportunity to use their own movement vocabulary, allowing students to display the full range of their movement ability. For example, in a creating task students can show the flexibility of their spine even though the task does not specifically call for it. The performing task, in contrast, tested students' ability to learn and memorize movements that did not give a complete test of exceptional students' abilities, even though beginning students found them demanding.

Field Test Issues

Use of videotape in dance assessment. There are two possible applications of video technology in assessing dance. First, videotape is a way to provide a stimulus for paper-and-pencil assessments. (The 1995 field test found video prompts to be ineffective as stimuli for performing tasks; students with live facilitators did significantly better than students trying to perform a dance from a video.) Second, videotape is a reasonably reliable and cost-effective means of recording student performances. However, certain problems must be addressed.

In the collection of data:

- the presence of the camera may change student responses.
- subtlety and nuance of behavior may be lost in the translation from three to two dimensions.
- it is difficult to position video cameras accurately enough to see and record every student throughout the entire task.

As a stimulus for student response, video prompts must be of good quality and the playback equipment must project an image large enough to be seen clearly by the students. If slides or color reproductions of various dance styles can be used, they would likewise need to be of appropriate size for individual examination.

Privacy. Precautions should be taken to ensure student privacy. In particular, videotapes of students should be secured to prevent their viewing by any unauthorized personnel.

Space: Dance assessments require a quiet space for watching and responding to videotapes. For the performance tasks, a gym or other spacious, well-lighted room free from obstructions is necessary.

Performance Task Setup. Students should be notified in advance so that they have time to prepare properly for tasks. In order to put students at ease, group size for movement activities should be no fewer than three students (although grade twelve dance-educated students were comfortable in pairs) and no more than six. Students should be arranged with adequate space to perform the tasks safely. The arrangement of students should be changed at least once to allow everyone to be observed and to assess student performance independently.

Footnotes

1. For details on the Arts Education Consensus Project, see the *Arts Education Assessment Framework for the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress (1994)*, the National Assessment Governing Board.

2. In its survey, NAEP identified only nine schools in the nationally representative sample with significant dance programs at the eighth-grade level. At least 50 were needed for a statistically valid survey.

For Further Information

Arts Education Assessment Framework for the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress. Single copies are available free from the National Assessment Governing Board, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 825, Washington, DC 20002–4233. Copies may also be obtained at **http://www.nagb.org/pub.html**.

National Standards for Arts Education. Copies available for $20 from the Music Educators National Conference, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston VA 20191, 800–336–3768.

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The NAEP Arts Education Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–527

NAEP and Music: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–529

NAEP and Theatre: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–528

NAEP and the Visual Arts: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–526

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14

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Focus on NAEP

Vol. 3 No. 2 August 1998

NAEP and Music: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment

Abstract: *NAEP has developed a new generation of assessment tasks for assessing student achievement in music. These tasks draw on the musical traditions of many cultures and historical periods, and use both paper-and-pencil and performance formats.*

In 1992, the Arts Education Consensus Project, sponsored by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), began an 18-month effort to establish objectives for assessing arts instruction in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. The National Endowment for the Arts, in collaboration with the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, funded the Arts Education Consensus Project, designed to develop the NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework.

The Consensus Project[1] identified objectives for arts education in general and individually for dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades. It also developed Assessment Specifications for each of the four arts, setting forth requirements for the content of the assessments in more detail. NAEP field-tested the music assessment for the fourth and eighth grades in 1995 and for the twelfth grade in 1997. In the spring of 1999, NAEP will publish a Field Test Process Report, on the development, administration, and scoring of arts tasks for the three grades. The report will cover all four arts, including music.

In 1997, NAEP conducted an assessment of eighth grade students' achievement in the arts. NAEP assessed students in music and the visual arts using a nationally representative sample of all students, regardless of their background in music or the visual arts. The sample for the music assessment was about 2,000 students, both public and private, enough to obtain statistically valid results. The theatre assessment was a targeted assessment, limited to students who would have completed at least 30 class hours in theatre instruction by the end of the 1996-97 school year. NAEP did not conduct a dance assessment, because there were too few dance programs in schools to allow for an adequate sampling of students. Results of the three assessments, together with samples of arts tasks for all four arts, will appear in the NAEP 1997 Arts Report Card, which will be published in the fall of 1998. NAEP had earlier assessed students in music in 1972 and 1978, using a different framework.[2] The next two sections of this *Focus on NAEP* summarize the current music framework as set forth in the *NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework*. Following these sections will be a discussion of the field test.

The NAEP Music Framework, Field Test, and Assessment break new ground in the assessment of the musical achievement of students, particularly student performance.

NOTE: For reasons of confidentiality, the student shown in this picture is not a NAEP participant.

PHOTO BY CLAIRE FLANDERS, courtesy Levine School of Music, Washington, DC

Table 1.—NAEP Guidelines for Music Assessment

Music assessment shall

- Affirm music as a way of knowing with a unique capacity to integrate the intellect, emotions, and physical skills.
- Honor music as a discrete art form, but also encourage students to see the artistic experience as a unified whole.
- Examine and report on developing abilities of students.
- Connect with students' real-life experiences of music.
- Evaluate students through performance.
- Go beyond quantification to include critical judgment.
- Use background variables to recognize differences in school resources (large-scale assessments only).
- Address both the processes and products of music, and expand the public's awareness of the importance of each.
- Produce information useful to a variety of audiences—students, parents, teachers, administrators, policymakers, artists, and other community members.
- Reflect a pluralistic view of music education, both in terms of individual products and the cultural bases of the music.

Source: NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board

The Importance of Music

Young people frequently define themselves to an extraordinary degree by the kind of music they prefer. But too often their involvement with music is only passive, or limited to listening to music of a single genre. This short-changes students' experience, which should include creating (composing and improvising) and performing (playing, singing, and conducting), as well as responding (listening, moving, analyzing, and critiquing) to a wide variety of music. Students also need to understand music's relationship to the other arts, and to other disciplines outside the arts.

The NAEP Arts Education Framework is founded on a vision of a society that believes the arts are essential for every child's complete development and education. To be fully educated, students must be able to draw on artistic experiences and knowledge as a means of understanding both themselves and the world around them. They must be able to use the arts as an important vehicle for communicating ideas in our increasingly multimedia society.

Contemporary popular music is both a reflection and an exemplar of this society. It draws on the most "natural" of instruments—the human voice—and on the most recent advances in electronics. It seeks out influences from cultures around the globe. Music education should allow children to understand and participate actively in their entire musical heritage, from past and present, and from all nations.

The expectation is not that all children will become professional musicians, although some will. What is expected is that they will have experienced the discipline, the challenge, and the joy of musical creation and will understand intimately the human significance of all the arts (see table 1 for assessment guidelines).

The Music Assessment Framework: Content and Processes

Music requires students to understand a unique set of musical symbols, the western system of notation. Performance demands the integrated development of intellectual/cognitive, feeling/affective, and psychomotor skills.

The music assessment covers both content and processes. Content includes (1) *knowledge and understanding* of music and (2) *perceptual, technical, expressive,* and *intellectual/reflective* skills. Processes include (1) *creating,* (2) *performing,* and (3) *responding*. While much of what students know, as well as what they can do, will be demonstrated through performance, the music assessment framework includes a written portion as well. Table 2 sets forth the music assessment framework in brief.

Content

Music knowledge includes the contexts of music, the form and structure of music, and the musical procedures. Knowing musical context includes understanding the historical period, style, and culture within which a work is created; the performance traditions of that time or place; and the appropriate aesthetic criteria for judging the quality of the work and its performance.

Knowing form and structure includes understanding the building blocks of music: the materials, notations, elements, and forms of musical works. Knowing musical procedures includes understanding the sequence and criteria for judgments involved in developing a new work, performing an existing work, or developing an opinion about a work or performance heard.

Music skills enable individuals to apply what they know by creating, performing, or responding to music. Technique is students' physical ability to transform their musical ideas into new creations or performances that accurately convey those ideas. Although technique is important to the processes of creating and performing, there are other skills of equal importance. Perceptual skills enable the student to hear and interpret the details that comprise music. These skills allow students to recall music in the mind's ear even when it is not physically present. Expressive skills give the work the meaning and feeling that moves the listener. Such skills also provide the basis for recognizing and responding to expression when it is present in a work or performance.

Table 2.—Music Assessment Framework

Processes		
Creating	**Performing**	**Responding**
When improvising, composing, or arranging music, students: • apply historical, cultural, and aesthetic understanding by creating stylistically appropriate alterations, variations, and improvisations; • use standard and/or non-standard notation to express original ideas; • evaluate, refine, and revise successive versions of original work; • demonstrate skill and expressiveness in the choice and use of musical elements; and • present the created work for others	When singing or playing music with musical instruments, students: • select appropriate repertoire; • apply skill by performing with technical accuracy; • read musical notation accurately; • evaluate, refine, and revise the performance; • develop an appropriate and expressive interpretation by applying understanding of structure and cultural and historical contexts of music; and • present the performance for others.	When singing or playing music with musical instruments, students: • select repertoire for listening; • analyze the elements and structure of music; • compare and contrast various musical styles; • identify formal and expressive qualities that distinguish a particular style of music; • place music within its cultural and historical context; • make critical judgments about technical and expressive qualities of musical performance and compositions; and • use movement or words to interpret and describe personal responses to music.

Content	
Knowledge	**Skills**
Applying knowledge of: Context personal social cultural historical Aesthetics Form and structure Processes	Applying cognitive, affective, and motor skills, including: Perceptual Intellectual/Reflective Expressive Technical

SOURCE: NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board

Processes

Creating For purposes of this assessment framework, creating refers specifically to improvising and composing new music. When improvising, musicians spontaneously create an original work or variation within certain limits or guidelines established by the particular style in which they are performing. For example, a person improvising the blues operates creatively within the limits of the blues style. When composing music, students usually have the freedom to create what their imagination dictates, including the choice of any style or genre. Students should also evaluate and revise their work before presenting it to the public.

Performing/Interpreting All students should be able to sing and to perform on instruments. For purposes of the national assessment, performing refers to the process of singing and playing existing musical works ("repertoire"). The performing process involves a wide variety of critical judgments and sophisticated understandings of musical syntax to develop an interpretation and a performance of that interpretation. As with all the arts, students are constantly applying and exercising higher order thinking, such as analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating, while creating and performing music.

Responding Although composers and performers respond to the music they are creating and performing, again for purposes of NAEP, the response process focuses on the role of the audience. Students must learn to understand and respond to music. Individuals respond to music in three general ways: physically, intellectually, and emotionally. Physical responses to music involve movement, such as dance or other rhythmic movement. Intellectual responses to music include activities such as labeling, analyzing, classifying, placing a work within a particular context, and making critical judgments about a work or performance. Emotional responses include the entire range of personal and intuitive responses to music. All three types of response play an essential role in making individual judgments about music.

NAEP assessed students' ability to carry out the processes—creating, performing, and responding—each of which

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Table 3.—Guidelines for Stimulus Materials for Music Tasks			
	Grade 4	**Grade 8**	**Grade 12**
Western Art Music	**25%** Baroque through contemporary	**40%** Renaissance through contemporary	**40%** Medieval through contemporary
American Folk and Popular Music	**50%** • Traditional songs • Instrumental music, including dance music, ragtime, and jazz • Contemporary pop	**35%** Include grade 4 categories and add • Blues • Gospel • Jazz • Country • Broadway musicals	**35%** Include grade 8 categories and add • Hybrid or fusion rock • Historical songs (from e.g., the Civil War or Great Depression) • Reggae • Jazz subcategories
Music Outside the Western Tradition	**25%** • Native American Indian • Sub-Sahara African • Latin American • Asian	**25%** Include grade 4 categories and add greater country-specific content	**25%** Include grade 8 categories and add greater country-specific content

consists of several essential components or steps. For example, all three processes involve analyzing and evaluating. These three processes also require students to understand the syntax of music as well as cultural and historical contexts.

The Field Test Samples

The field test of the NAEP music assessment tasks for grades four and eight were conducted in 1995, while the twelfth-grade tasks were tested in 1997. A general population of students participated in the fourth- and eighth-grade field tests. Students in these field tests were not required to have taken any music instruction. In the twelfth-grade field test, students were sampled from school music band, orchestra, choir, or general music classrooms. In all, about 1,500 fourth-grade students, 1,500 eighth-grade students, and 1,200 twelfth-grade students participated in the field tests. The twelfth-grade field tests were held to evaluate the validity of the music tasks, even though NAEP had determined that it would not conduct an assessment for twelfth-grade students.

Music Tasks

NAEP used two types of assessment tasks in the field tests: paper-and-pencil tasks and performance tasks. Assessment tasks were prepared by the Educational Testing Service, under the guidance of a committee of experts in music education. The fourth-grade field test devoted 40–50 minutes to the paper-and-pencil tasks and 15–25 minutes to the performance task. The eighth-grade field test devoted 40–50 minutes and 15–20 minutes, respectively, while the twelfth-grade field test devoted 45–60 minutes and 20–30 minutes. In all cases, times are approximate only, depending on the specific tasks involved.

The performance tasks assessed creating or performing, while the paper-and-pencil tasks assessed students' abilities to respond to music. To ensure coverage of all aspects of musical knowledge, and to lighten the burden on a given student, NAEP developed a number of different task "blocks," for both the paper-and-pencil and performance tasks. Students in the sample were assigned at random to several paper-and-pencil blocks and one performance block.

The musical subject matter included compositions by long-recognized composers like Bach and Mozart, as well as contemporary composers regarded as working in the classical tradition, like Aaron Copland. Students also responded to folk music, drawn from both western and non-western sources, as well as American jazz and contemporary popular music. (See table 3 for a breakdown of the kinds of music used in the field tests, taken from the Consensus Project's Assessment Specifications.) NAEP plans to make available to the public all tasks, both paper-and-pencil and performance, that are not covered by copyright.

NAEP performance tasks are designed to be as authentic as time and resources permit. However, the assessment tasks also must offer the same opportunities and the same challenges, in the same circumstances, for all the students assessed. No comparison across students is possible without such standardization.

1. Paper-and-Pencil Tasks

Paper-and-pencil tasks required students to respond to recordings and musical notation, as well as other stimuli. The questions students answered were multiple choice, short constructed-response, and extended constructed-response. Students could receive partial credit on both short and extended written response questions (see table 4). Some tasks required students to write musical notation themselves.

The knowledge asked of students could be quite formal— the proper use of musical terminology such as *ostinato, legato,* and *staccato*—or informal. For example, one question asked students "What kinds of emotion do you think the composer was trying to convey?" In some cases, students listened to specially recorded performances that contained intentional faults, and were asked to identify and comment on errors in areas such as pitch, dynamics, rhythm, tempo, and tone quality.

2. Performance Tasks

The field test performance tasks covered both creating and performing music. Some tasks involved creating only, or performing only, while some involved both. For example, students might be asked first to sing a song and then improvise on the melody. Some tasks also required students to respond to their own performances by listening to a tape made as they sang or played and then evaluating their performances on the tape.

Performance tasks had to be appropriate for students both with and without formal musical training. Often, students performed on MIDI electronic keyboards. Some performance tasks expected students who had received musical training to bring their instruments and perform on them. Students without instruments sang the exercises.

Scoring guides for the performance tasks provided four possible levels of performance: inadequate, limited, adequate, and developed (see table 5). This reflected the intent of the framework to assess the abilities of exceptional students as well as average ones.

Field Test Issues

The NAEP field tests in music provided several challenges in item development and test administration. Training materials and procedures had to be developed to ensure that all of the field tests were conducted in a standardized fashion. Scripts and stimuli used with performance tasks had to include alternate versions of music selections and repertoire in order to accommodate a wide variety of student instruments and voices. Test developers and field test administrators worked together to create assessment scripts and task formats that encouraged less experienced students to attempt to engage in the full range of musical activities that were assessed.

Scoring of field test items proved challenging as well. Among other things, the field tests required scoring rubrics that would accommodate the widely diverse types of student responses to creating/performing items. The scoring guides also had to be able to describe the full range of student responses generated during the field tests.

Creating and administering a national assessment was very challenging. The NAEP Music Framework, Field Test and Assessment provide useful models for future assessments, at the state and local level, as well as nationally. Several important problems were confronted during the development and scoring of the assessment. Among these were how to create tasks suitable for a variety of students with a variety of educational backgrounds, while also making distinctions among levels of student proficiency. These issues, among others, will be explored in the upcoming arts reports.

Table 4.— Twelfth-Grade Music Field Test Scoring Guide for Paper-and-Pencil Task

Both short and extended constructed-response questions in the NAEP music field test allowed for partial credit. The scoring guide for a question requiring students to provide musical notation would set a standard similar to the following:

Inadequate: Student's notation does not indicate the correct number of notes in the measure.

Limited: Student's notation does indicate the correct number of notes, but contains inaccurate note values, or contains only one rhythmic note value that is accurate.

Adequate: Student's notation gives the correct rhythmic values for all the notes, using standard musical notation.

Footnotes

1. For details on the Arts Education Consensus Project, see the *Arts Education Assessment Framework for the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress (1994)*, the National Assessment Governing Board.

2. For the1972 music assessment, see *The First National Assessment of Musical Performance* (1974), Report 03-MU-01, Education Commission of the States, Denver, CO, ERIC # ED155126.

For the 1978 music assessment, see *Music 1971-1979: Results from the Second National Music Assessment* (1981), National Center for Education, National Institute of Education, Washington, DC, ERIC # ED210226.

For Further Information

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Table 5.— Twelfth-Grade Music Field Test Scoring Guide for a Performance Task	
The four levels of the scoring guides for the performance tasks on the NAEP music field test covered the full range of possible student performance. The guide for students' ability to sing with appropriate pitch/intonation set levels similar to the following: **Inadequate:** The student sings in a monotone, or an unstable or unclear tonality during more than half of the performance (or the student sings in an incorrect key throughout the performance.)	**Limited:** The student follows the general contour or shape of the melody, although many pitches are inaccurate. The overall intonation of the performance is inaccurate in many places. **Adequate:** The student sings almost all of the notes correctly, in the correct key with a stable tonal center throughout most of the performance. There are some execution flaws in the performance. **Developed:** The student sings all notes correctly, in the correct key with a stable tonal center throughout the performance. There are few if any execution flaws in the performance.

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The NAEP Arts Education Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–527

NAEP and Dance: Framework, Field Test, and Survey, NCES 98–459

NAEP and Theatre: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–528

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Focus on NAEP

Vol. 3 No. 3 August 1998

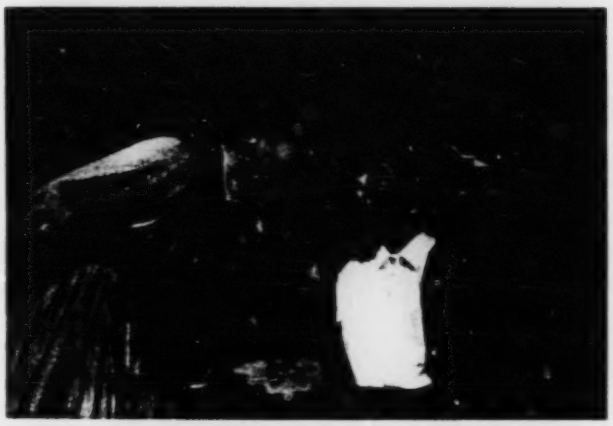
NAEP and Theatre: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment

Abstract: *NAEP has developed its first set of assessment tasks for measuring student achievement in theatre. These tasks draw on a wide range of dramatic forms and use both paper-and-pencil and performance tasks.*

In 1992, the Arts Education Consensus Project, sponsored by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), began an 18-month effort to establish objectives for assessing arts instruction in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) had assessed music education in 1972 and 1978 and visual arts education in 1975 and 1978. The National Endowment for the Arts, in collaboration with the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, funded the Arts Education Consensus Project, enabling it to create the NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework.

The Consensus Project[1] identified objectives for arts education in general and individually for dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts, in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades. It also developed Assessment Specifications for each of the four arts, setting forth requirements for the content of the assessments in more detail. NAEP field-tested the theatre assessment for the fourth and eighth grades in 1995 and for the twelfth grade in 1997. In 1998, NAEP will publish a Field Test Process Report, on the development, administration, and scoring of arts tasks for the three grades. The report will cover all four arts, including theatre.

In 1997, NAEP conducted an assessment of students' achievement in the arts, for the eighth grade only. NAEP assessed students in music and the visual arts using a nationally representative sample of all students, regardless of their background in music or the visual arts. The theatre assessment was a targeted assessment, limited to students who would have completed at least 30 class hours in theatre instruction by the end of the 1996-97 school year. The students attended schools providing at least 45 semester hours of classroom instruction in theatre for eighth graders. The sample for the theatre assessment was about 2,000 students, in both public and private schools, enough to obtain statistically valid results. NAEP did not conduct a dance assessment, because there were too few dance programs in schools to



Theatre is rooted in the universal human impulse to play and to imitate. The NAEP Theatre Field Test and Assessment provide innovative methods for assessing student achievement in theatre.

NOTE: For reasons of confidentiality, the students shown in this picture are not NAEP participants.

Photo of 1990 production of "The Children's Hour" courtesy Living Library Theatre, Inc., Santa Monica, California

Table 1.—NAEP Guidelines for Theatre Assessment

Theatre assessment shall

- Affirm theatre as a way of knowing with a unique capacity to integrate the intellect, emotions, and physical skills.
- Honor theatre as a discrete art form, but also encourage students to see the artistic experience as a unified whole.
- Examine and report on developing abilities of students.
- Connect with students' real-life experiences of theatre.
- Evaluate students primarily through performance.
- Go beyond quantification to include critical judgment.
- Use background variables to recognize differences and inequities in school resources (large-scale assessments only).
- Address both the processes and products of the theatre, and expand the public's awareness of the importance of each.
- Employ a comprehensive vision of theatre education, including what ought to be in theatre education, rather than simply what is.
- Produce information useful to a variety of audiences—students, parents, teachers, administrators, policy makers, artists, and other community members.
- Sample student performance separately for general and specialized theatre programs (large-scale assessments only).
- Reflect a pluralistic view of theatre education, both in terms of individual products and the cultural bases of the theatre.

Source: NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board

allow for an adequate sample. Results of all three assessments, together with samples of arts tasks for all four arts, will appear in the 1997 Arts Education Report Card, which will be published in the fall of 1998.

The next two sections of this *Focus on NAEP* summarize the framework for the theatre assessment, which can be found in full in the *NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework*. Following these sections will be a discussion of the theatre field tests.

The Importance of Theatre

Theatre is rooted in the universal human impulse to play, imitate, create, and share ideas and feelings. A social art form, theatre reveals both the human condition and the human experience. In both its traditional forms and the newer media of television and film, theatre transports players and audience through time and space without leaving the here and now.

The NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework is founded on a vision of a society that believes the arts, including theatre, are essential for every child's complete development and education. To be fully educated, students must be able to draw on artistic experiences and knowledge as a means of understanding both themselves and the world around them. The expectation is not that all students will become professional artists, although some will. What is expected is that they will have experienced enough of the discipline, the challenge, the joy of creating in different art forms to intimately understand the human significance of theatre, dance, music, and the visual arts (see table 1 for guidelines for theatre assessment).

The Theatre Assessment Framework: Content and Processes

The theatre assessment covers both content and processes. Content includes (1) *knowledge and understanding* of theatre and (2) *perceptual, technical, expressive,* and *intellectual/reflective skills*. Processes include (1) *creating/performing*, and (2) *responding*. While much of what students know, as well as what they can do, will be demonstrated through performance, the theatre assessment framework includes a written portion as well. Table 2 sets forth the theatre assessment framework in brief.

Content

Knowledge means knowing about the art of theatre; its history, cultural, social, and personal contexts; its forms and structure, how it creates meaning, and its aesthetic qualities. Students understand the literary, visual, aural, oral, kinesthetic, and psychological aspects of a theatrical event. They are able to engage in self-criticism, taking into consideration form and structure, contexts, and aesthetic responses.

Skills are the abilities associated with the technical, perceptual, and expressive processes of theatre. Included in this category are such activities as skills required in creating a text, acting, staging, designing, and articulating a response. Abilities to create, perform, and respond in the theatre are predicated on the application of both knowledge and skills simultaneously.

Table 2.—Theatre Assessment Framework

Processes	
Creating/Performing	**Responding**
When creating and performing in theatre, students: • develop scripts and scenarios; • make design and technical choices to communicate locale and mood for dramatic materials for theatre, film, and television; • develop characters through an acting process; and • direct by interpreting dramatic texts and organizing time and people in planning and rehearsing improvised and scripted scenes.	When perceiving, analyzing, interpreting, and judging works in theatre, students: • describe and analyze artistic choices in their own work and construct meaning; • describe and compare elements, styles, genre, media, and dramatic literature; • place work in context (personal, social, historical, and cultural); and • evaluate performances as audience and critic.
Content	
Knowledge	**Skills**
Applying knowledge of: Context personal social cultural historical Aesthetics Form and structure Processes	Applying cognitive, affective, and motor skills, including: Perceptual Intellectual/Reflective Expressive Technical

SOURCE: NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board

Processes

Creating and Performing are closely linked in theatre. At the same time, different aspects of theatre call for different creative processes. All call for imagining, conceiving, and generating. Playwriting requires the use of all three processes to create character, story, dramatic actions, and dialogue. Acting involves discovering and developing emotions and creating a series of actions for a character. Designing requires discovering, developing, and organizing an environment. In order to direct, students must analyze a script and develop an interpretation by organizing the time, place, spaces and rhythms of a production. Creating in film making and television demand the development and organization of the elements of theatre as well as the special elements of the medium.

Performing is central to theatre studies. Performing is the evidence of creating; it is the process viewed and heard by an audience. Performing is a highly complex collaborative activity in which the performer is aware of the audience and fellow performers, responding and adjusting the performance accordingly. The ways of learning demanded by performance are equally complex, requiring the interplay of all the processes noted in creating. Performing is impossible to assess through any other means than through the processes themselves.

Responding includes both students' reactions as spectators to each other's work and reflecting on their own work. They respond to outside artists and performers. They examine artistic choices in ideas, stories, scripts, designs, and actions by explaining, describing, clarifying, comparing, and evaluating. They apply their knowledge of the theatre and analytical skills to determine which elements are successful in a performance; but responding in theatre is more than analysis. Responding involves emotional and intuitive behaviors as well. Students become responsive audience members of theatrical performances, films, and tele-play presentations. They recognize a variety of theatrical genres and styles and identify and compare them in theatre, film, and television.

The Field Test Samples

The field test of the NAEP theatre assessment tasks for grades four and eight were conducted in 1995, while the twelfth-grade tasks were tested in 1997. A general

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Table 3.—Guidelines for Stimulus Materials for Theatre Tasks			
	Grade 4	**Grade 8**	**Grade 12**
Theatre	10% • Dramatic Literature • Children's Plays	30% • Rituals (Non-European Cultures) • Shakespeare • Comedy • American Musical • Serious Drama	40% Draw from Grade 8 categories and add: • Epic Theatre • Spanish Golden Age • Greek Tragedy • 20th Century American and World Drama
Literature	40% • Fairy Tales • Folk Tales • Children's Literature • Poetry	25% Draw from Grade 4 categories and add: • 19th Century American/ European • Modern • Non-Western	15% Draw from Grade 8 categories
Film and Television	10% • Television • Film	20% Draw from Grade 4 categories and add: • Social Realism • Special Effects	25% Draw from Grade 8 categories and add: • Documentary • Experimental • Foreign Films
Other	40% • Other Art Forms • Historical and Current Events	25% Draw from Grade 4 categories and add: • Anthropology	20% Draw from Grade 8 categories

population of students participated in the field tests for grades four and eight. However, in the twelfth-grade field test, only students who had participated in in-school theatre classes were included in the sample. About 2,000 students participated in each of the field tests. The twelfth-grade field tests were held to evaluate the validity of the theatre tasks, even though NAEP had determined that it would not conduct an assessment for twelfth-grade students.

Theatre Tasks

NAEP used two types of assessment tasks in the field tests: paper-and-pencil tasks and performance tasks. Assessment tasks were prepared by the Educational Testing Service, under the guidance of a committee of theatre education experts. The fourth-grade field test devoted about 60 minutes to the paper-and-pencil tasks and 15–30 minutes to the performance task. The eighth-grade field test devoted 60 and 30 minutes, respectively, while the twelfth-grade field test devoted 60 minutes and 60–90 minutes, respectively. In all cases, assessment times are approximate only, depending on the specific tasks involved.

The performance tasks assessed the creating and performing aspects of theatre. The paper-and-pencil tasks assessed students' abilities to respond to theatre, but also required them to make and defend a wide variety of creative decisions as well. To ensure coverage of all aspects of theatrical knowledge, and to lighten the burden on a given student, NAEP developed a number of different task "blocks," for both the paper-and-pencil and performance tasks. Students in the sample were assigned at random to several paper-and-pencil blocks and one performance block.

NAEP performance tasks are designed to be as authentic as time and resources permit. However, authenticity is limited by the fact that the assessment tasks must also offer the same opportunities and the same challenges, in the same circumstances, for all the students assessed. No comparison across students is possible without such standardization. NAEP plans to make available to the public all tasks, both paper-and-pencil and performance, that are not covered by copyright.

1. Paper-and-Pencil Tasks

In addition to having students respond to theatrical performances, paper-and-pencil tasks asked students to address such issues as set design, decor, costume, casting, cinematic techniques, sound effects, and direction. (Examples are drawn throughout from the twelfth-grade field test.)

Students read excerpts from plays, looked at photographs, posters, and other visual stimuli, and saw video clips, both from films and from a tape of a live theatrical presentation. (See table 3 for a breakdown of the kinds of materials used in the field tests, taken from the Con-

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sensus Project's Assessment Specifications.) The tasks used multiple-choice, short constructed-response, and extended constructed-response questions (see table 4 for a sample scoring guide for an extended constructed-response task). Over two thirds were constructed-response rather than multiple-choice.

2. Performance Tasks

Performance tasks asked students to work together in small groups (usually two to four students) to do such things as improvise a scene on the basis of a few introductory lines of dialogue or to write and perform a brief play. Video cameras recorded student performances. In some of the tasks, students were asked to comment on their work—what they were trying to achieve, and how well they did it.

Because of the collaborative nature of theatre, a student's performance in several of the tasks was a combination of an individual and a group score, unusual in NAEP. Both the paper-and-pencil and the performance tasks allowed students recognition for exceptional performance. Scoring guides for the performance tasks gave credit for students who performed their tasks in a "masterful" manner (see table 5 for a sample scoring guide for a performance task).

Field Test Issues

In the theatre field tests for grades four and eight there were many issues that NAEP had not dealt with before. Capturing student group performances (two to four students) on video for evaluation presented many challenges. A workable space had to be prescribed on the floor. A video camera, which would remain stationary throughout the performance, had to be properly placed to record the entire scene. Backgrounds were not always taken into account, and there was no special lighting,

Table 4.— Twelfth-Grade Theatre Field Test Scoring Guide for Paper-and-Pencil Task

Extended constructed-response questions on the paper-and-pencil test gave students such tasks as determining whether to use a realistic or abstract set for a play. The scoring guide, designed to capture the full range of student abilities, gave credit according to standards similar to the following:

Unacceptable: The student makes no choice between a realistic or abstract set; the student makes a choice without explaining it; the student's explanation is unclear.

Partial: The student makes a choice, but cites only one reason for that choice, and offers no basis for the choice from the text of the play.

Essential: The student makes a choice and gives two reasons for that choice, but fails to provide support from the text of the play or provides support that is unclear or vague.

Extensive: The student makes a choice and gives two reasons for that choice, giving clear support from the text of the play. In addition, the response indicates an understanding of the difference between an abstract and a realistic set.

which meant that it was sometimes difficult to see facial expressions. Since the microphone was on the camera, it was sometimes difficult to hear actors' voices, particularly if the task took place in a noisy area. Facilitators had to have special training, so that they could make the students feel comfortable enough to perform without being "too helpful"—unfairly contributing to the students' performance.

In the twelfth-grade field test, NAEP found it necessary to increase the amount of time allowed for performance tasks from 60 to as much as 90 minutes. Traditionally, NAEP has sought to use no more than one class period for an assessment task. However, NAEP found that some of the theatre performance tasks required more time, particularly the tasks that required students to create, perform, and then analyze their work.

Table 5.— Twelfth-Grade Theatre Field Test Scoring Guide for a Performance Task

Student performance tasks were scored using such factors as the degree of spatial awareness demonstrated by students in their performance. Scoring guides used criteria similar to the following:

Unacceptable: The student demonstrates no sense of spatial awareness, with regard to herself/himself, the other actors, or the audience.

Partial: The student demonstrates a spatial awareness some of the time. However, at some points the student is either blocked by or blocks another actor and/or speaks with her/his back to the audience.

Essential: The student demonstrates a spatial awareness a majority of the time. The student may have one minor lapse by either blocking or being blocked by another actor and/or speaking with her/his back to the audience.

Extensive: The student demonstrates consistent spatial awareness during the entire improvised scene, with no lapses of any kind.

The greatest difficulty encountered in the field tests was obtaining a full range of performance from the students sampled. This was particularly true in the eighth-grade field test. In the fourth- and eighth-grade field tests, which were given to random cross sections of students, it was difficult to obtain performances that went beyond the simplest level. To fairly assess the students and obtain results that resembled the breadth of the theatre standards, NAEP decided to sample only students who had had some instruction in theatre, for both the twelfth-grade field test and the eighth-grade assessment. The difference was significant. Student performance evidenced the full range envisioned by the scoring rubrics.

Creating and administering a national performance assessment was very challenging. The NAEP Theatre Framework, Field Test and Assessment provide useful models for future assessments, at the state and local level, as well as nationally. Several important problems were confronted during the development and scoring of the assessment. Among these were how to create tasks suitable for a variety of students with a variety of educational backgrounds, while also making distinctions among levels of student achievement. These issues, among others, will be explored in the upcoming arts reports.

Footnotes

1. For details on the Arts Education Consensus Project, see the *Arts Education Assessment Framework for the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress (1994)*, the National Assessment Governing Board.

For Further Information

Arts Education Assessment Framework for the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress. Single copies are available free from the National Assessment Governing Board, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 825, Washington, DC 20002–4233. Copies may also be obtained on the World Wide Web at **http://www.nagb.org/pub.html**.

National Standards for Arts Education. Copies are available for $20 from the Music Educators National Conference, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston VA 20191, 800–336–3768.

Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, NCES 95–082, provides data obtained from questionnaires sent to the principals of nationally representative samples of public schools. It is not in print, but is available over the NAEP web site at **http://nces.ed.gov/NAEP/**.

The following Focus on NAEP publications are also available free from the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20208–5653. Copies may also be accessed over the World Wide Web at **http://nces.ed.gov/NAEP/**.

The NAEP Arts Education Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–527

NAEP and Dance: Framework, Field Test, and Survey, NCES 98–459

NAEP and Music: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–529

NAEP and the Visual Arts: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–526

The Focus on NAEP series briefly summarizes information on the ongoing development and implementation of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The series is a product of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Pascal D. Forgione, Jr., Commissioner, and Gary W. Phillips, Associate Commissioner for Education Assessment. This Focus on NAEP was written by **Alan Vanneman**, of the Education Statistics Services Institute, in support of NCES, **Claudette Morton**, chair of the NAEP Arts Standing Committee and co-chair of the Theatre Planning Committee, and **Lisa Beth Allen** of the Sundance Institute, Theatre Program. To order other NAEP publications, call Bob Clemons at 202–219–1690, or e-mail bob_clemons@ed.gov.

The NCES World Wide Web Home Page is **http://nces.ed.gov/**.

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Focus on NAEP

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NAEP and the Visual Arts: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment

Abstract: *NAEP has developed a new generation of assessment tasks for student achievement in the visual arts. These tasks draw upon the concepts, skills, and processes used to create and understand visual images from a variety of world cultures and historical periods, using both paper-and-pencil and performance formats.*

In 1992, the Arts Education Consensus Project, sponsored by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), began an 18-month effort to establish objectives for assessing arts instruction in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) had assessed the visual arts in 1975 and 1978[1]. The National Endowment for the Arts, in collaboration with the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, funded the Arts Education Consensus Project, designed to develop the NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework.

The Consensus Project[2] identified objectives for arts education in general and individually for dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts, in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades. It also developed Assessment Specifications for each of the four arts, setting forth requirements for the content of the assessments in more detail. NAEP field-tested the visual arts assessment for the fourth and eighth grades in 1995 and for the twelfth grade in 1997. In the spring of 1999, NAEP will publish a Field Test Process Report, on the development, administration, and scoring of arts tasks for the three grades. The report will cover all four arts, including the visual arts.

In 1997, NAEP conducted an assessment of eighth-grade students' achievement in the arts. NAEP assessed eighth-grade students in music and the visual arts using a nationally representative sample of all students, regardless of their background in music or the visual arts. The sample for the visual arts assessment, approximately 2,500 students, in both public and private schools, was large enough to obtain statistically valid results. The theatre assessment was a targeted assessment, limited to students who would have completed at least 30 class hours in theatre instruction by the end of the 1996-97 school year. Because there were too few dance programs in schools to allow for an adequate na-

The NAEP 1997 Visual Arts Assessment allows extensive assessment of student creativity.

NOTE: For reasons of confidentiality, the students shown in this picture are not NAEP participants.

PHOTO BY UNIFOTO

Table 1.—NAEP Guidelines for Visual Arts Assessment

Visual arts assessment shall

- Affirm the visual arts as a way of knowing with a unique capacity to integrate the intellect, emotions, and physical skills.
- Honor the visual arts as a discrete art form, but also encourage students to see the artistic experience as a unified whole.
- Examine and report on developing abilities of students.
- Connect with students' real-life experiences of the visual arts.
- Evaluate students through performance.
- Go beyond quantification to include critical judgment.
- Use background variables to recognize differences in school resources (large-scale assessments only).
- Address both the processes and products of the visual arts, and expand the public's awareness of the importance of each.
- Produce information useful to a variety of audiences—students, parents, teachers, administrators, policymakers, artists, and other community members.
- Reflect a pluralistic view of visual arts education, both in terms of individual products and the cultural bases of the visual arts.

Source: NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board

tional sample, NAEP did not conduct an assessment in dance. Results of the three assessments, together with samples of arts tasks for all four arts, will appear in the NAEP 1997 Arts Report Card, which will be published in the fall of 1998.

The next two sections of this *Focus on NAEP* summarize the current visual arts framework, which is set forth in full in the *NAEP 1997 Arts Education Assessment Framework*. Following these sections will be a discussion of the visual arts field tests.

The Importance of the Visual Arts

The NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework is founded on a vision of a society that believes the arts are essential for every child's complete development and education. To be fully educated, students must be able to draw on artistic experiences and knowledge as a means of understanding both themselves and the world around them. They must be able to use the arts as an important vehicle for communicating ideas in our increasingly multimedia society.

The visual arts are rightly described in the plural: at their broadest, they take in such forms as painting, drawing, printmaking, and sculpture. They also embrace more recent media (photography, film, video, and computer imaging), and functional design areas such as architecture and industrial and graphic design. The visual arts enable students to reflect on what they inherit from past and present world cultures.

The expectation of the framework as a whole and for the visual arts in particular is not that all students will become professional artists, although some will. What is expected is that they will have experienced enough of the discipline, the challenge, and the joy of creating in different art forms to understand intimately the human significance of all the arts, not simply the visual arts (see table 1 for assessment guidelines).

The Visual Arts Assessment Framework: Content and Processes

The visual arts assessment covers both content and processes. Content includes (1) *knowledge and understanding* of the visual arts and (2) *perceptual, technical, expressive*, and *intellectual/reflective* skills. Processes include (1) *creating*, and (2) *responding*. (In the visual arts, unlike dance, music, and theatre, performing is not one of the processes). While much of what students know, as well as what they can do, will be demonstrated through creative work, the visual arts assessment framework includes a written portion as well. Table 2 sets forth the visual arts assessment framework in brief.

Table 2.—Visual Arts Assessment Framework

Processes	
Creating	**Responding**
• Students generate subjects, themes, problems, and ideas for works of art and design in ways that reflect knowledge and understanding of values (personal, social, cultural, historical), aesthetics, and context.	• Students reflect upon and evaluate their own works of art and design. • Students describe works of art and design in ways that show knowledge of form, aesthetics, and context (personal, social, cultural, historical).
• Students invent and use ways of generating visual, spatial, and temporal concepts in planning works of art and design. • Students select and use form, media, techniques, and processes to achieve goodness of fit with the intended meaning or function of works of art and design. • Students experiment with ideas (sketches, models, etc.) before final execution as a method of evaluation. • Students create a product that reflects ongoing thoughts, actions, and new directions.	• Students analyze and interpret works of art and design for relationships between form and context, form and meaning or function, and the work of critics, historians, aestheticians, and artists/designers. • Students articulate judgments about works of art and design that reflect attitudes and prior knowledge (description, analysis, interpretation). • Students apply judgments about works of art and design to decisions made in daily life, developing a personal belief system and world view that is informed by the arts.
Content	
Knowledge	**Skills**
• Understanding of context (personal, social, cultural, and historical) • Aesthetics • Form and Structure • Technical Processes	• Perceptual • Technical • Expressive • Intellectual/reflective

SOURCE: 1997 NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board

Content

Knowledge in the visual arts relates to understanding the meaning of visual form and how it is conveyed. For example, students must be able to account for the influence of context (personal, social, cultural, and historical) on meaning in both creating and responding to works of art and design. They explore the content of visual form through examinations of subject matter, means of representation, media and processes, visual organization, composition, and theoretical frameworks (philosophical or aesthetic constructs) for creating and interpreting the visual arts. In areas of functional design, knowledge of user/audience characteristics is also critical to creating objects and environments that meet performance criteria.

Skills in the visual arts relate to understanding how to construct or interpret meaning in visual form. Creating skills include gathering information; analyzing and synthesizing experience; generating many visual ideas or solutions; selecting among competing ideas, media, or processes; planning and organizing the visual execution of ideas; evaluating ideas and form; and applying technical proficiency in the making of visual objects. Responding includes many of the above skills applied in interpretive contexts. Verbal skills exhibited in oral and written presentations and the construction of convincing arguments are also relevant.

Processes

Creating in the visual arts and areas of functional design involves students in the construction and communication of meaning through the making of works of a tangible

Table 3.—Guidelines for Stimulus Materials for Visual Arts Tasks

The categories for stimulus materials are meant to provide a broad view of visual art from a historical as well as a geographic perspective. It will be important to select images and examples that are appropriate to the grade level. Color print reproductions or three-dimensional reproductions of works of art/design need to reflect the diversity of art styles, periods, and cultures, as well as representation of fine and folk or craft traditions

Percentage by Geographic Regions/Cultural Groups	
African	15%
Asian (Near/Middle East)	10%
Asian (Far East)	10%
Australian/Pacific	10%
European	20%
North America	20%
South America	15%
Percentage by Time Periods (Global Scope)	
pre-13th century	20%
13th–14th centuries	10%
15th–16th centuries	10%
17th–18th centuries	15%
19th century	15%
20th century: 1900–1950	15%
20th century: 1950–present	15%

object, visible performance or environment. It involves feeling, thinking, and doing. The creative process seeks to integrate the artist's intuitive and emotional insights with rational thought, critical judgment, and the physical and cognitive abilities required to make successful visual forms.

Responding in the visual arts means interpreting works of art or design done by artists/designers or the students themselves. Responding is an interpretive and evaluative behavior that reveals knowledge of how visual form communicates meaning in various contexts. It includes the ability to articulate as well as formulate judgments.

The writers of the framework sought to be as inclusive as possible both in terms of the kinds of art students would be asked to analyze, and in terms of the kinds of production tasks students would be given. The Consensus Project's Assessment Specifications require coverage of art dating from before the 13th century to the present, from a wide range of geographic areas, including Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America (see table 3).

The framework envisioned that students would have the opportunity to show what they know and can do vis-à-vis the visual arts by both analyzing and creating works of art and design. Students would engage in a range of processes that would capture the complexity of analyzing and creating.

The Field Test Samples

NAEP conducted the fourth- and eighth-grade visual arts field tests in 1995. About 2,700 public and private school students participated in each of the two field tests. NAEP conducted the twelfth-grade field test in 1997. About 1,200 students participated. All three field tests sampled a general population of students.

Visual Arts Tasks

NAEP used two types of assessment tasks in the visual arts field tests: paper-and-pencil and performance. Assessment tasks were prepared by the Educational Testing Service, under the guidance of a committee of experts in visual arts education. The fourth-grade field test devoted 60 minutes to the paper-and-pencil tasks and 30–40 minutes to the performance task, as did the eighth-grade field test. The twelfth-grade field test devoted 65 minutes and 45–60 minutes, respectively. In all cases, assessment times are approximate only, depending on the specific tasks involved.

The performance task assessed creating, while the paper-and-pencil tasks assessed students' abilities to respond to the visual arts. To ensure coverage of all aspects of knowledge of the visual arts, and to lighten the burden on a given student, NAEP developed a number of different "blocks," for both the paper-and-pencil and the performance tasks. Students in the sample were assigned at random to several paper-and-pencil blocks and one performance block. While the NAEP 1997 Visual Arts Assessment went further in covering the full range of the visual arts than previous assessments, due to constraints of time and expense it was not possible to assess student performance in such areas as film and video.

NAEP performance tasks are designed to be as authentic as time and resources permit. However, the assessment

tasks must also offer the same opportunities and the same challenges, in the same circumstances, for all students assessed. No comparison across students is possible without such standardization. In 1998, NAEP will make all tasks not subject to copyright, both paper-and-pencil and performance, for all three grades, available to the public.

1. Paper-and-Pencil Tasks

The paper-and-pencil tasks used multiple-choice, short constructed-response, and extended constructed-response questions. Constructed-response questions require written answers from the students. (See table 4 for an example of the kinds of issues raised by constructed-response questions.) On the field test for twelfth-grade students, constructed-response questions constituted over two thirds of the total number of paper-and-pencil questions.

The paper-and-pencil tasks went well beyond traditional "art appreciation" questions. One task asked students to consider several sculptures, intended for use in a public space, and to select the one most appropriate for an imaginary community, explaining their reasons for doing so, based on such considerations as the makeup of the community and the purpose of the statue. Students were also asked to consider design issues involved in basic household utensils.

2. Performance Tasks

Performance tasks required students to work with a variety of media. For example, the twelfth-grade field test performance tasks involved Plasticine (a clay-like substance), paints, drawing pencils, drawing charcoal, and a variety of construction materials. Students were given such tasks as printmaking, creating a relief sculpture, creating sculptures or drawings while taking inspiration from processes or emotions described in a brief story, and designing an architectural model of an interior space. (See table 5, next page, for a sample scoring guide.) Often, students were asked to critique their own work.

Creating and administering a national assessment was very challenging. The NAEP Visual Arts Framework, Field Test, and Assessment provide useful models for future assessments, at the state and local level, as well as nationally. Several important problems were confronted during the development and scoring of the assessment. Among these were how to create tasks suitable for a variety of students with a variety of educational backgrounds, while also making distinctions among levels of student ability. These issues, among others, will be explored in the upcoming arts reports.

Footnotes

1. For results from the first assessment of the visual arts, see the following:

Design and Drawing Skills. Selected Results from the First National Assessment of Art, June 1977. National Center for Education Statistics, Washington, DC. ERIC # ED141249.

Knowledge About Art. Selected Results from the First National Assessment of Art. Education Commission of the States, Denver, CO. ERIC # ED155116.

Attitudes Toward Art. Selected Results from the First National

Table 4.— Twelfth-Grade Visual Arts Field Test Scoring Guide for Paper-and-Pencil Task

The visual arts assessment field test gave students tasks such as reacting to a sculpture. Scoring guides used criteria similar to the following, giving credit for "extensive" answers that went beyond what was required:

Unacceptable: The student does not address the sculpture in any meaningful way, failing to identify any specific aspect of the work as its strongest element, and failing to describe how that aspect relates to the work as a whole. Examples: "It's pretty. It's interesting. I like it."

Partial: The student offers a brief comment on one aspect of the work, without explanation. Examples: "There is a small figure and a large head, that make an interesting contrast," or "There's a coat with no one in it."

Essential: The student singles out one aspect of the work as the strongest, and specifically describes it, but relates it to the work as a whole in only a general way.

Extensive: The student singles out one aspect of the work as the strongest and specifically describes it. The student also relates the aspect to the work as a whole in a clear and intelligent way. The student may refer to formal elements of the sculpture, or to the emotional or imaginative experience that the sculpture provokes.

Table 5.— Twelfth-Grade Visual Arts Field Test Scoring Guide for a Performance Task

The scoring guides for the performance tasks on the NAEP visual arts field test attempted to capture the full range of possible student outcomes. In one performance task for the twelfth-grade field test, students were asked to develop an architectural model for a space that would represent a solution for a specified problem. To obtain full credit, students had to provide a model that met all of the following criteria:

- the problem is solved through the definition of space rather than the use of decoration.
- the solution is built to a practical scale.
- the solution exhibits an understanding of the role that placement of design features plays in defining the experience of the user.
- the solution exhibits an understanding of the role of the placement of the entrance and exit.
- the solution goes beyond the notion of a conventional room by exploring the potential of changing elevation, piercing walls, and modifying the shape of the space.
- the solution exhibits an understanding of the structural principles necessary to make walls stand up.
- the solution exhibits an understanding of the nature of materials and how they behave; joinery and spanning distance are used correctly and inventively.

Assessment of Art. Education Commission of the States, Denver, CO. ERIC # ED166122.

For results from the second assessment of the visual arts, see *Art and Young Americans, 1974–1979: Results from the Second National Art Assessment*. National Center for Education Statistics; National Institute of Education, Washington, DC. ERIC # ED212538.

2. For details on the Arts Education Consensus Project, see the *Arts Education Assessment Framework for the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress (1994)*, the National Assessment Governing Board.

For Further Information

Arts Education Assessment Framework for the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress. Single copies are available free from the National Assessment Governing Board, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 825, Washington, DC 20002–4233. Copies may also be obtained on the World Wide Web at **http://www.nagb.org/pub.html**.

National Standards for Arts Education. Copies are available for $20 from the Music Educators National Conference, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston VA 20191, 800–336–3768.

Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, NCES 95–082, provides data obtained from questionnaires sent to the principals of nationally representative samples of public schools. It is not in print, but is available over the NAEP web site at **http://nces.ed.gov/NAEP/**.

The following Focus on NAEP publications are also available free from the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20208–5653. Copies may also be accessed over the World Wide Web at **http://nces.ed.gov/NAEP/**.

The NAEP Arts Education Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–527

NAEP and Dance: Framework, Field Test, and Survey, NCES 98–459

NAEP and Music: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–529

NAEP and Theatre: Framework, Field Test, and Assessment, NCES 98–528

The Focus on NAEP series briefly summarizes information on the ongoing development and implementation of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The series is a product of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Pascal D. Forgione, Jr., Commissioner, and Gary W. Phillips, Associate Commissioner for Education Assessment. This Focus on NAEP was written by **Alan Vanneman**, of the Education Statistics Services Institute and **Mac Arthur Goodwin** of the South Carolina State Department of Education. To order other NAEP publications, call Bob Clemons at 202–219–1690, or e-mail bob_clemons@ed.gov.

Information on NAEP may also be obtained over the World Wide Web at **http://nces.ed.gov/NAEP/**.